**America’s New Drug of Choice: Revenge**

My friends, along with the jury, believed the case so heinous that the perpetrator deserved to die. But isn’t every murder heinous?

We are assailed on every front by subtle attempts to legitimize vengeance. Watching an NFL football game on TV, I saw a commercial for “Faster,” a new movie featuring a big dude--Dwayne Johnson (The Rock)--with a huge gun. He announces that he is going to avenge the killing of his brother. A voice says “They’re going after everyone on his list.” Johnson then intones, “God can’t save you from me.”

I rather thought that in democratic societies justice is meted out in the courts. Does no one remember that law is the glue that holds societies together? Individual score-settling is a criminal act.

A juror who voted for the death penalty in the Connecticut trial wrestled with that question, clearly grasping the larger dilemma in matters of societal vengeance and the death penalty. Quoted in The New York Times, juror Ian Cassell said, “No one is happy. Nothing is better. Nothing is solved.”

**Rodgers, Walter. "America's New Drug of Choice: Revenge." Christian Science Monitor. 29 Nov 2010: n.p. SIRS Issues Researcher.Web. 11 Jan 2012.**